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THE

NATURE, &c.

OF

CHARITY

CONSIDERED.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The Nature, the Object, the Diſtinctions, and the Seaſon of Charity Conſidered.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

ST. THOMAS'S,

JAN. 1, 1772,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

Children educated at the Charity-School in GRAVEL-LANE, SOUTHWARK,

BY

JOHN CALDER, D.D.

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MDCCLXXII.

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NATURE, &c.

OF

CHARITY.

" *As we have therefore opportunity, let us*
" *do good unto all men, eſpecially unto*
" *them who are of the houſehold of faith.*"

GALAT. VI. 10.

I Have made choice of the paſſage now read, as the ground of a diſcourſe upon Charity. The word generally tranſlated by this expreſſion in the New Teſtament, is often uſed in a very extenſive ſignification, and is always the ſubject of the nobleſt deſcriptions, and the higheſt encomiums. In its moſt comprehenſive ſenſe it includes in it our love to God, our Redeemer, and mankind, and is juſtly repreſented

as the end of the chriſtian inſtitution, and a perfection, without which we have nothing that is truly valuable, and with which we have all that is requiſite. The various points of chriſtian faith and duty, are only ſo far uſeful or important, as they are either neceſſary or miniſterial to beget, to ſupport, and to perfect it.*

I intend not at this time, to conſider Charity in its broadeſt acceptation, but ſhall in the following diſcourſe, moſt commonly make uſe of the term, to denote that tenderneſs which humane people exerciſe, or ought to exerciſe, with reſpect to the errors, the faults, and the evils of their kind; or in other words that affectionate principle, by which our ſocial conduct ought to be uniformly directed, and by which our final deſtiny ſhall be principally determined.†

The Apoſtle in the conciſe words of the text, connected as we ſhall ſee with the preceding verſes, gives us a ſummary, but a complete view of this kind of Charity, and ſuggeſts to us a proper method for treating upon it. He points out to us the nature, the object, the diſtinctions, and the ſeaſon of Charity, and recommends it to us by a moſt forcible argument.

* Mat. xxii. 40. Rom. xiii. 8, 10. Gal. v. 14, vi. 2. Ja. ii. 8. Col. iii. 14. I. Tim. i. 5. I. Pet. iv. 8. I. Cor. xiii.

† Mat. xxv. 31, &c.

The

The Apoſtle, in the Iſt place, points out the nature of Charity.

It conſiſts, he teaches us, " in doing good." True Charity includes both beneficence and benevolence. It intereſts us in the perſons, the properties, and the characters, in the preſent and in the future happineſs, of all with whom we are connected by humanity. It manifeſts the ſincerity and the warmth of its kind inclinations, by the heartineſs and uniformity of its endeavours to procure their good-will, and to promote their felicity.

The Apoſtle's deſcription of the nature of Charity, is in very general terms, and liable therefore to miſtake, or miſrepreſentation. Let us then conſider what muſt be the nature of ſuch a benevolent diſpoſition and beneficent practice, as will fully anſwer the Apoſtle's deſcription of true Charity. They muſt have, I preſume, the following characteriſtics.

1ſt. The principle of true Charity muſt be ſeated in the heart. It muſt not be mere inſtinct, or only conſtitutional good-nature. It muſt be a virtue, the offspring of reflection and unfeigned faith, formed into the ſettled complexion and temper of the mind. We muſt thus be " rooted and grounded in love." Our

 hearts,

hearts, from pure and Chriſtian motives, muſt be intereſted in the preſent and future felicity of our kind; rejoice in every degree of virtue and happineſs among men, and be ſtudious on all occaſions to further, and to perfect them. Thus we muſt be, both prompted, and purified, by the belief and power of the truth, to the unfeigned love of our brethren.

2dly. As the principle of true Charity muſt come out of a pure heart, and from unfeigned faith, ſo alſo the practice of it, muſt be accompanied with a good conſcience, and muſt therefore be both directed by juſtice, and regulated by prudence.

It muſt be regulated by juſtice; in other words, there can be no Charity where there is no juſtice. The practice of beneficence cannot ſuperſede the obſervation of equity: nor will reſpect to one duty atone for the neglect of another. If we haſten to be rich and not by right, in vain do we think, without repentance, to ſave our ſouls by ſhewing mercy to the poor; or that Charity without reſtitution, can cover the multitude of our ſins. There can be no right to diſtribute, where there is no right to poſſeſs: there can be no Charity in giving what is not our own to give, and what ſolely belongs to thoſe from whom it was filched by fraud,

or

or extorted by violence. Vain and worſe, are the moſt ſplendid acts of beneficence, and the moſt ſpecious erections of piety, when the cries of the over-reached or oppreſſed enter into the ears of God, " while the ſtone crieth from " the wall, and the beam anſwereth it, behold " the hire of the labourers kept back." *

But as the practice of true Charity muſt be regulated by juſtice, ſo it muſt likewiſe be reſtricted by prudence, that long-ſighted virtue that views things in combination, and attends to the conſequences of actions, both the nearer, and the more remote. Prudence ponders in her ſcales, good againſt evil, one good againſt another, and teaches truly charitable people to ſacrifice the leſſer to the greater. It would doubtleſs be " doing good" to a criminal to ſcreen him from proſecution and puniſhment, but prudence reſtricts us from ſuch injudicious kindneſs, by reminding us that it is not true Charity, but real cruelty, to injure ſociety, in order to benefit an individual, and thus to prevent the execution of public juſtice, on the uniform, and impartial adminiſtration of which the welfare and ſecurity of the public depend.

But though true Charity would not, or ſhould not carry us to interpoſe for the life of a crimi-

* Hab. ii. 11. Ja. v. 4.

nal,

nal, when ſparing him would be hurtful to the community, yet it may prompt and ſhould induce us, to uſe every lawful, every prudent and tender method to reclaim him, to reſtore him to virtue, and to reconcile him to God.

In a word unleſs the principle of benevolence, and the practice of beneficence, be ſuch as we have now deſcribed, they cannot, we apprehend, come up to the Apoſtle's definition of true Charity. Whatever elſe we may honour with that name, is not genuine, but ſpurious and counterfeit Charity, it can neither be, nor do good, and we may " give all our goods to feed " the poor, and even our bodies to be burnt, " and ſtill be nothing."

Having briefly conſidered the Nature, we proceed, in the IId place, to conſider the Objects of true Charity.

It conſiſts in " doing good," and its objects are " all men." It may, and it ſhould begin with ourſelves, but it muſt extend to all. The obligation to Charity is founded, the Apoſtle teaches us, in humanity. Every perſon that partakes of our nature, ought to partake of our affection. Strangers, inferiors and enemies, even the erroneous, and the profligate, have all, by their being men, their reſpective claims upon it.

True

True Charity utterly diſallows and diſdains all prejudices, either on the ſcore of country, or of condition, it intereſts its children in men and nations between whom mountains and ſeas have placed barriers almoſt inſuperable. "It is "not puffed up, it vaunteth not itſelf, it behaveth "not unſeemly to any;" but conſtrains, or ought to conſtrain us, to regard every man in adverſity, every man, in a word, that we can render in any reſpect wiſer or better, as our neighbour, our brother, and our fleſh.

As true Charity is not influenced by prejudice, ſo neither is it biaſſed by paſſion. It wiſhes well, and does good even to the unthankful, the malevolent and the injurious. While we live in this world, all who are ſuſceptible of our happineſs, are entitled to our Charity. That it ought not to be reſtrained in its good will, and its kind offices, even by religious conſiderations, our Saviour teaches us in the parable, or the true hiſtory of the Samaritan.

A Jew journeying from Jeruſalem fell among thieves, who left him neither money to procure, nor ſtrength to ſupplicate aſſiſtance. A Levite ſaw him and paſſed by on the other ſide, leſt involuntary compaſſion might intereſt him in his miſery. A Samaritan, to whom the country and the religion of the diſconſolate ſufferer were

deteſtable,

deteſtable, ſaw and felt his misfortunes; he aſſiſted him with his care, he ſupported him with his money, he befriended him with his recommendations, and ſhewed him all the kindneſs, and did him all the good, which man owes to man in ſuch circumſtances: "Go ye (ſaith our Saviour to all his diſciples) "Go ye, and do likewiſe."

In a word, true Charity is kind, and does good to people of all principles, and to thoſe too who have none. It ſheds its benign influences even on the worthleſs and the wicked. It transforms, or ſhould transform us, into the likeneſs of the great and good Father of us all, for whom, every one that has any ſupport, or any pleaſure in this world, is a witneſs that he is, and that he does good. "He makes his "ſun to ſhine on the unthankful and the evil, "and his rain to fall on the juſt and the unjuſt:" and true Charity cultivates, it is, the ſpirit of his ſon in our hearts, that ſeals us as his offſpring, and leads, or ought to lead us, to walk as he alſo walked, who with a feeling of human infirmities, went always about doing good, and cloſed his godlike character with a prayer, and an apology for his murderers.

Having conſidered the Nature, and the Objects, let us conſider, in the IIId place, the Diſtinctions of true Charity. If we would be truly charitable,

charitable, we muſt doubtleſs " do good," and " unto all men." For it is the nature of true Charity, to " do good," and " all men" are unqueſtionably the objects of it.

But we are not equally debtors to all. In Charity Nature dictates predilection, Reaſon diſtinguiſhes among its claimants, and Nature, Reaſon and Religion agree to appropriate the greateſt kindneſs to the worthieſt objects. Theſe then are they, who are of the " Houſehold of " Faith."

The Apoſtle here repreſents, all who live in the belief and obedience of the Goſpel, according to the perſuaſion of their own minds, as the ſervants of one maſter, and members of one, and the ſame family; and this " houſehold " of faith," has, he affirms, a preferable title to our Charity.

True Charity, according to the account that the Apoſtle here gives us of it, has its ſeat in reaſon, and is judicious. Moſt fit it is, that it ſhould " do good unto all men," but eſpe- " cially to them who are of the houſehold " of faith." For ſurely ſetting aſide every thing that ſavours of bigotry or party-ſpirit, when we conſider the characters and the circumſtances of this houſehold, particularly in the days of

the Apoſtle, it will evidently appear, that it was then, and that it is ſtill, preferably entitled to the kind wiſhes, and good offices of Charity. The houſehold of Faith, were then more indigent; they are always when indigent, more deſtitute of reſources than other people; their worth too is ſuperior; and their relation to Chriſtians is intimate, permanent, everlaſting. Theſe points require ſome illuſtration; let us then briefly conſider them.

1ſt. "The houſehold of faith" is with the utmoſt propriety, preferably recommended to the Charity of Chriſtians, (for to Chriſtians the Apoſtle here ſpeaks) becauſe it is, at leaſt it was, in his days, moſt indigent. Chriſtianity permits, it requires men to exerciſe with conſcientiouſneſs, and with diligence, their reſpective employments. But they muſt conſtantly follow them in the highway of the upright, which is to depart from evil. Now this is not always, certainly it was not then, the ſhorteſt, or the ſureſt road to proſperity and opulence; want may often overtake them who keep it, "as an armed man," and ſorrows did then roll upon them "as a wide breaking-in of waters." Poverty and perſecution were the neceſſary, unavoidable conſequences of a chriſtian profeſſion and practice in the age that the text refers to. In thoſe calamitous times, the great point

was

was not, as now, to be rich or great in this world, or to lead a pleaſureable or an indolent life. It was not ſo much to ſelect, and to follow that of all other occupations which might be the moſt lucrative, or the moſt honourable. They were obliged to think, far more, of keeping clear conſciences, than of getting great eſtates; and a cave in a deſart, and their life for a prey, were the moſt common objects of their deſire and purſuit. Times are happily altered in this reſpect, but certainly in the days here alluded to, Chriſtians were in general more indigent, and more miſerable than other men.

And 2dly, if a Chriſtian ſhould even now be reduced, as all Chriſtians were then reduced to poverty and diſtreſs; in the midſt of their ſtraits they had not, they have not, the ſame reſources as other men. The mere men of the world, have a thouſand, and a thouſand ſhifts, to retrieve their affairs, and to better their circumſtances. They can avail themſelves alternately of ſincerity and diſſimulation, of truth and falſhood, of vice and virtue. The artifice of their conduct, like the alloy in our coin, detracts from their value, but fits them better for the buſineſs of this world. Now from practiſing any of all theſe arts of left-handed wiſdom, the "houſehold of faith" are reſtricted. Suffer they muſt, and continue to ſuffer, rather

than ſin. The fidelity of their words, the purity of their manners, the juſtice of their cauſe, at moſt, diligence and aſſiduity in ſome lawful occupation, are all their reſources, and poor at beſt they muſt be, and ineffectual they often prove, among ſuch creatures as men are, and in ſuch a world as this is, where multitudes co-operate not indeed in the general welfare, but only to circumvent, to over-reach and to ſup-plant one another. The "houſehold of faith" had therefore a preferable title to the Charity of Chriſtians, becauſe they were more indigent; they have it ſtill, becauſe when indigent, they are more deſtitute of reſources than other men.

3dly. The houſehold of faith have a previous claim to our kindneſs, becauſe of their ſuperior excellence.

Nature doubtleſs diſtinguiſhes characters, and Reaſon appropriates our degrees of re-gard, to their dignity. But unqueſtionably, the chriſtian character is of all others, the moſt worthy and the moſt godlike; it is there-fore the propereſt object of our charitable preference. The Chriſtian, if he maintains his character conſiſtently, maintains his in-tegrity inflexibly. He bears proſperity with temper, and adverſity with fortitude; ever poſſeſſing his ſoul in patience, he perſiſts with con-

continuance in well-doing; adheres conſcientiouſly to what he believes to be truth and righteouſneſs; and cannot either by allurements, or diſcouragements, be drawn aſide from his ſtedfaſtneſs into the errors of the wicked. The "houſehold of faith" in ſhort, live not by ſenſe. Their chief affections are ſet on things above, their converſation is in Heaven, and they look principally at things unſeen, inviſible, and eternal. Elevated therefore above others, by the ſublimity of their thoughts, the greatneſs of their ſentiments, the dignity of their deſires, and the purity of their manners, they are both "the light of the "world, and the ſalt of the earth." In a word the members of this houſehold, are people of the moſt reſpectable, and the moſt amiable characters, who manifeſt their love to their creator, by wiſhing well, and by doing good to his creatures; and who are paſſing continually, from glory, to glory, into his image, and perfection. Suppoſe now ſuch people ſtruggling virtuouſly with complicated diſtreſſes, and like their Saviour, perfecting themſelves through ſufferings, and it will be impoſſible for fancy itſelf, with all its creative power, to draw a human character, more intereſting to their fellow-chriſtians, or better or equally entitled to a preference in their kindneſs, and good offices.

4thly,

4thly, and finally, The " houſehold of faith" has a peculiar and a preferable right to the Charity of their fellow-chriſtians, becauſe their relation to them, is moſt intimate, and everlaſting. We are made of one blood, to dwell over all the face of this earth, and ought not therefore to hate, or to wrong, but to love, and to befriend one another. Here we are moreover bound and endeared to each other, by the ties of country, conſanguinity, and friendſhip. Soon however muſt all theſe relations terminate, very ſoon the alliances of governors and governed, of fathers and children ſhall ceaſe; and all the connections, and dependencies adapted to the ſtate of this world, ſhall end with it. But the bonds that unite the houſehold of faith, are not temporary, but everlaſting. They are not therefore it is plain, the creeds and articles of this or that party in the Chriſtian church. Alike arrogant, unchriſtian and impious are they all. Not uſeleſs only, but prepoſterous and peſtiferous have ſuch bonds been; long have they kept aſunder the honeſt, but never could they bind the hypocritical. They have ever rendered the houſehold of faith a divided, diſorderly family, as it is at this day. The bonds that unite the houſehold of faith, even here, are incomparably more noble; they are indiſſoluble and divine.

The

The members of this houſehold, may not be univerſally conſpicuous, nor always known even to each other. For in the earlier age of the Goſpel, the fury of perſecution diſperſed them; frequently the veil of their modeſty conceals them; often too the arts of calumny and party-ſpirit diſguiſe them; human creeds and articles render them not only inviſible, but odious to each other, and "their life is hid with Chriſt "in God." Nevertheleſs their kindred ſpirits form a ſociety both real and numerous, firm and well-cemented. A ſociety, harmoniſed, and kept harmonious, by the ſame notions of the perfections of God, ſimilar inclinations to know and do his will, and ſimilar endeavours to grow in light, and in love, and in all the fullneſs of God. Of this houſehold ſurely are all, who do conſcientiouſly, according to the perſuaſion of their own minds, believe the doctrines, obey the precepts, and cultivate the ſpirit of Chriſt. Strangers and aliens are they, whether of Paul, or of Apollos, of whatever name or denomination, whoſe tempers witneſs not for them that they are the ſons of God, and who are not habitually actuated by that ſpirit which the great houſeholder forms in the hearts of his houſehold, to ſeal them as his own, and embolden them by their likeneſs to him, to call him their Father. Utterly unconnected with this faithful family, and entirely without

without the pale of it, are all they whoſe tempers are ſenſual, earthly, or deviliſh, and who are under captivity to that ſpirit of error and malevolence that reigns in the children of diſobedience. Connected as we have ſaid, " the " houſehold of faith" is in this ſtate, and over their union death itſelf has no influence, but to refine and to perfect them. If, as the ſeaſon prompts us, we carry our views into eternity, to which we are faſt haſtening, there we find their intercouſe ſubſiſting and its endearments increaſing. There this houſehold of faith, the ſheep of the great ſhepherd ſelected out of every fold, a vaſt multitude which no man can number, of all nations and languages, ſhall have their ſpirits perfected, and with the celeſtial part of the family, be united in the eternal bonds of love and perfectneſs, to Chriſt, and God, who is all, and in all.

The Apoſtle therefore does not in the leaſt diſcover bigotry, or party-ſpirit, but indeed the trueſt judgment, and the utmoſt propriety of ſentiment, in recommending the houſehold of faith as the peculiar and principal objects of chriſtian Charity. For the reaſons now mentioned, and others omitted or unobſerved, the diſtinction is evidently juſt, and their preferable title to brotherly kindneſs and Charity is indubitably good.

If

If we would then be truly charitable, we muſt "do good unto all men, but eſpecially unto them who are of the houſehold of faith, as we have opportunity," as God gives us occaſion and ability. Let us then in the

IVth, and laſt place, conſider the proper ſeaſon for the culture and exerciſe of Charity, and the motive from which the Apoſtle here recommends it.

The precept in the text is grounded upon the repreſentation of our preſent exiſtence given in the preceding verſes. A repreſentation not confined to the times of the Apoſtle, but applicable to the life of Chriſtians and of men in all ages and periods of this world. It is neceſſary to conſider it a little, as it diſcovers to us the proper ſeaſon for practiſing Charity, and ſuggeſts too a powerful argument for the practice of it.

Our life here, in this world, is not, the Apoſtle teaches us, to be conſidered as final or unconnected; but merely as introductory to another, and preparative to a better and an eternal ſtate. The ſame analogy that there is between the ſeaſon of ſowing ſeeds, and the ſeaſon of reaping them, preciſely the ſame analogy there is between the life that now is, and that which is to come. The ſame natural relation that there

is between the grain that the huſbandman ſows, and the grain that he gathers, the ſame neceſſary connection there is between the actions of our preſent life, and the nature of our future deſtiny. Time is given us to prepare for eternity; the firſt is our ſpring, the ſecond our autumn. As in harveſt it is too late to determine the crop we wiſhed to reap, for that muſt be done in the ſeed-time, ſo at death, our deſtiny is fixed, it is then too late to alter, or to mend it, for that is the buſineſs of mortal life. "Whatſoever a man "ſoweth here, that he ſhall, that he muſt reap "hereafter."

"While we have therefore the opportunity," (or as this clauſe ought to have been rendered, in order to have kept up the imagery) * "ſo "long therefore as we have the ſeaſon," while ſpring continues with us, we ought to improve it by being and by doing good, that we may rejoice in the harveſt, and "lay up a good founda-"tion for the time to come."

Short, Sirs, is the life of mortal man. Our days here paſs ſwift as the poſt that haſteth by. Soon the earth and all that is therein ſhall be burnt up, and time itſelf ſhall be no longer. "Of that day or hour knoweth no man, not "the Son, but the Father only."

* Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν.

But

But this we all know perfectly, that there wants only a trifling increaſe or diminution of our humours, a ſlight degree of elemental ſtrife, or one of innumerable accidents, that all alike defy the foreſight or the prevention of humanity, and with regard to each of us, time terminates. Since therefore our conduct here, muſt determine our deſtiny hereafter; ſince ſoon, time itſelf ſhall be no more, and with reſpect to every individual of mankind, its length is inconſiderable, and its continuance precarious; ſince we can live here but a few years, and may live but a few days; the great and principal concern that lies upon us all, is to ſecure our intereſt in the manner here pointed out to us, in that important ſtate which is ſo near us, which muſt ſoon ſucceed to the preſent, and continue unchanged and unchangeable for ever.

Let us all therefore, while it is the ſeaſon, "do good, unto all men, eſpecially to them "who are of the houſehold of faith." "And "as in due time we ſhall reap if we faint not, "let us not be weary in well-doing," but embrace and improve every fair opportunity of making men wiſer and better and happier, and of gaining and giving them every reaſonable advantage of body, of mind, or of condition. Let us adviſe, excite, and quicken them to all praiſeworthy undertakings; and uſe our beſt

endeavours to obviate their errors, to extricate them from their perplexities, to remove their depreſſions, to eaſe their pains, to ſooth their ſorrows, and to relieve their neceſſities. Let us watch, and catch all occaſions of mitigating the ſufferings, or of increaſing the enjoyments of our kind. Let us in a word, cheriſh and exerciſe Charity in all pure, in all juſt, and prudent reſpects, as the parent and the guardian of our higheſt pleaſures; as our great comfort through life, and at death; as the moſt certain evidence of our goodneſs here, and the beſt ſecurity of our happineſs hereafter; as our way and our guide to Heaven.

Permit me here to lay before you, the preſent ſtate of the charitable inſtitution, which turned my thoughts on this ſubject, to which you have long been generous contributors, and for which I appear here to ſolicit the continuance of your generoſity.

The foundation of the Charity-School in Gravel-Lane, Southwark, was laid in the reign of James II. in the year 1687, when all that was dear to us, as men, as Britons, and as Chriſtians, was in the moſt critical ſituation.

A Jeſuit, to ingratiate himſelf by his zeal for the introduction of Popery, opened then a

ſchool,

ſchool, and gave public notice, that he would inſtruct the children of the poor for nothing. The Proteſtant Diſſenters, conſtant friends to the liberties of Britain, and the religion of the Bible, diſtinguiſhed themſelves as ſuch on this occaſion; and three of their number, whoſe names deſerve to be handed down with honour to poſterity, Mr. Arthur Shallet, Mr. Samuel Warburton, and Mr. Ferdinando Holland, laid the foundation of this Proteſtant Free-School. By private donations and ſubſcriptions, by charitable legacies, and two annual collections, here, and at Long-Ditch in Weſtminſter, the ſchool has been ever ſince ſupported, and the number of the ſcholars has been increaſed from 40 to 200. It is favourably ſituated for the benefit of the poor, whoſe children are admitted promiſcuouſly into it, initiated in uſeful learning, habituated to honeſt induſtry, and educated upon a plan equally calculated to qualify them to be good citizens and good Chriſtians. It was I am informed the firſt inſtitution of this kind in which the Proteſtant diſſenters were concerned, and I ſhould certainly wrong them, if I entertained any ſuſpicions of its failing in their hands. When I addreſs myſelf to them, and on a ſubject of this nature, I am reconciled to an office for which I am ill qualified, and ſenſible that I have the advantage of ſpeaking to people ever diſtinguiſhed for deviſing and doing liberal things.

things. By ſuch things I am perſuaded they ever will ſtand. It would indeed be a deplorable ſign of the times, and a ſubject of deep and national regret, if in a place where no hand is backward to help on every idle ſcheme of luxury and pleaſure, an inſtitution prompted by the moſt rational piety, and promiſing the moſt extenſive utility, ſhould fail for want of friends.

To give a good education to thoſe who could not otherwiſe get it, is, if it be not their own faults, giving them every thing. It is the beſt compend of true Charity. It is obviouſly calculated for the enlargement and benefit of the houſehold of faith. Many I perſuade myſelf brought into this houſehold by means of it, have lived to praiſe and bleſs their benefactors; and for your preſent beneficence many of theſe children, and generations yet unborn will I doubt not, " riſe up and call you bleſſed."

But I forbear to expatiate on the utility of this Charity. Few there are here who have not come, on purpoſe to contribute according to their abilities to its encouragement, and continuance.

None of you, I am confident, will ever regret that you have begun a new year, with helping on the education of ſuch a number of the riſing generation, who may by your generoſity on this occaſion,

occaſion, be ſaved from ignorance and vice, and trained up to be exceedingly uſeful in this world, and ſupremely happy in the next.

It will add greatly both to the number and the degrees of your pleaſures to reflect, that you have been fellow-workers together with God, in purifying and keeping them pure; in endeavouring to make them wiſe and good, and uſeful and happy.

The day faſt comes, when we muſt all give an account of our ſtewardſhips. Death, like ſome dark night felon, ſteals ſilent and unperceived upon us. At its appearance, the recollection of the ſmall ſums that we have ſent to heaven in works of Charity and mercy, will be a greater conſolation and ſupport to our minds, than all the treaſures that we leave behind us upon earth.

We ſhall then be thoroughly ſatisfied that it is prudent to make true friends to ourſelves of our riches, and provident to tranſmit ſome part of them hence, where we have no continuing city, into that place or ſtate, wherein we are to live for ever. Wiſe it truly were to lay up our treaſures in heaven, that at death we may enter upon them in everlaſting habitations.

When

When this precarious ſpring-time is over, when our ſowing ſeaſon ends, when the harveſt cometh, when the great year of God ſhall be completed, and the whole houſehold of faith ſhall be gathered together, the bread that we have thrown on the waters ſhall appear, the ſeeds that we now ſow in Charity, we ſhall ſurely reap in felicity; and ſhall enter with all our brethren of the houſehold of faith, into that bleſſed ſtate and ſociety, where we ſhall inherit for ever, the full crop of light and gladneſs that is ſown to the righteous, the charitable and the upright in heart.

To you, my young friends, let me now addreſs myſelf.

Suffer not, I beſeech you, the generoſity of your benefactors to be loſt upon you, but by your docility, your obedience and application, be true friends to yourſelves, and ſhew your gratitude to thoſe who wiſh you ſo well, and do you ſuch good.

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth. Study and ſtrive to know, and to do his will. Read his word, and pray to him often and earneſtly for his bleſſing on them and on you. Your happineſs here and hereafter depends

depends on your doing your duty to God and to all men. To obtain the favour that you wiſh for from them, improve the favour that you now enjoy. Waſte not in idleneſs your time, which is your only treaſure. Preſerve on your hearts a grateful ſenſe of your manifold obligations to God and men; preſerve ever a ſincere and a ſacred regard and love for truth, for it is only by the belief, the influence, and the ſpirit of the truth that ye can be purified or kept pure from meanneſs and evil and miſery, here and hereafter. But if ye ſincerely and carefully ſeek the truth, and embrace it, and hold it in righteouſneſs, and follow it in love, it will keep you now, and when you come forth into the world, from being led wrong through ſimplicity or ignorance, or by prejudice or paſſion. It will guard you from the danger of falſe opinions, and from the power of evil habits: it will preſerve you from errors in your minds and from faults in your lives: it will make you and keep you juſt in underſtanding and upright in heart, and render you wiſe and good and happy in this life, and in that which is to come.

Your teachers, and your parents, as they have opportunity will I hope to the utmoſt of their power, forward the generous deſigns and endeavours of your benefactors; and ſtrive to form

and to confirm in you, all good diſpoſitions, and the love of them.

They will I hope, exerciſe their ingenuity and their affection, to win your young hearts to the knowledge, the belief and the obedience of the truth as it is in the Goſpel. They will I perſuade myſelf pray both with you, and for you; and ſtrive by their care, their inſtructions and good examples, to keep your hearts from being exerciſed in covetous practices; to ſave you from the pollutions of the world and the ſnares of the wicked; to guard you againſt all the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs; to regulate your tempers and to keep them regular according to the ſcriptures, and in a word, to train you up to ſound principles and to good practice.

May the great God of love and wiſdom who inſpired direct this inſtitution, and hear the prayers, and proſper the endeavours of yourſelves, your inſtructors and your benefactors for your good. May ye, and all of us, through the belief and the power of the chriſtian truth, be trained up, for an inheritance in the kingdom of light, of love, and of little children.

AMEN.

HYMN.

THRO' every age, eternal God,
Thou art our reſt, our ſafe abode:
High was thy throne ere Heaven was made,
Or earth thy humble footſtool laid.

Long hadſt thou reign'd ere time began,
Or duſt was faſhion'd into man;
And long thy kingdom ſhall endure
When earth and time ſhall be no more.

A thouſand of our years amount
Scarce to a day in thine account;
Like yeſterday's departed light,
Or the laſt watch of ending night.

Death, like an overflowing ſtream,
Sweeps us away; our life's a dream;
An empty tale, a morning flower,
Cut down and wither'd in an hour.

Teach us, O Lord, how frail is man;
And kindly lengthen out our ſpan,
Till a wiſe care of piety
Fit us to die, and dwell with thee.

FINIS.